FIRST AID
PREVENTION OF AND FIRST AID FOR SKIN IRRITATION FROM CREOSOTE

Contents

	Page
1. General	1
2. Cause of the Irritation	1
3. Preventive Measures	1
4. First Aid Practices	1

1. GENERAL

1.01 With the increasing use of creosote treated poles and other creosote treated wood products in the telephone business, it is desirable and necessary that those who have occasion to handle these materials and may be susceptible to creosote irritation know and follow simple precautions to prevent skin irritations which may result from contact of the skin with the creosote, together with the first aid practices to follow if irritation does occur.

2. CAUSE OF THE IRRITATION

2.01 In creosote used for treating poles and crossarms for the Bell System, the amount of tar acids is limited to 10 per cent. or less. In these tar acids there may be present a small fraction of creosols, phenols and other ethereal bodies with acid radicals which have a tendency, when brought directly into contact with the skin of those who are susceptible, to produce skin irritations, unless preventive measures are adopted.

3. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

3.01 Employees climbing or handling creosoted poles or handling or working on creosoted crossarms where some of the creosote may be transferred to the skin, as, for example, while the poles or arms are new or during hot weather, should observe the following precautions:

(a) Do not roll up the shirt sleeves.

(b) Wear gloves and keep the neck well covered with collar or handkerchief.

(c) As far as practicable, keep the legs of the pants or overalls well down over the ankles.

(d) When direct contact of the skin with creosote is likely, rub the arms and face well, before starting the work, with the petroleum jelly supplied for this purpose or with vaseline purchased at a nearby drug store. The carbolated petrolatum of the standard first aid kits is not suitable for this purpose and should NOT be used because of its carbolic acid constituent. As soon as practicable after completing the work upon which the coating of the skin with petroleum jelly or vaseline was required, wipe off the grease with a clean, dry cloth and then wash well with plenty of soap and hot water.

(e) Never rub the eye or wipe perspiration from it with the hand or shirt sleeve if they have been exposed to creosote. This is an IMPORTANT precaution and should be borne in mind whenever working on or with creosoted wood products.

(f) When there has been direct contact of the skin with free creosote, wash the part with abundant hot water and soap, then pour the standard "Creosote Burn Wash" freely over the exposed skin area. This wash should NOT BE APPLIED in or near the eye.

(g) If practicable, before lunch and always after the day's work, when exposure to creosote has occurred, wash the hands, arms, face and neck with plenty of soap and hot water. In washing the face, keep the hands away from the eyes.

(h) Overalls and other articles of clothing which have been in contact with creosote should be soaked in soapy hot water and washed as soon as practicable.

4. FIRST AID PRACTICES

4.01 The following are first aid practices to be followed should there be indications of skin irritation or an eye burn from creosote.

(a) Skin Irritations:

(1) Apply the "Creosote Burn Wash" as suggested as a precautionary measure in Paragraph 3.01-(f), above.

(2) If the irritation continues for 24 hours or if a large skin area is affected, obtain a doctor's services.

(b) Eye Burns:

(1) Flush the eye with water. To do this, submerge the eye in a basin of water and open and close the eyelids.

(2) Follow (1) by dropping two or three drops of castor oil into the eye, using a clean eye-dropper, or by applying castor oil to the eye with an eye-cup.

(3) Apply an eye bandage and obtain a doctor's services.

© American Telephone and Telegraph Company, 1931
Printed in U. S. A.